



***URBAN DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS:  
A POVERTY PRESCRIPTION FOR  
HAMILTON?***

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## *Presentation Themes*

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- 1. New Urban Poverty: Wicked Problems**
- 2. Solutions Elsewhere: Creative Federalism**
- 3. Canada? Not so Much**
- 4. Canadian Policy Ingenuity 'Under the Radar':  
Urban Development Agreements**
- 5. A Canada-Ontario-Hamilton Urban  
Development Agreement?**



## *New Urban Poverty: Wicked Problems*

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**Large body of research makes three key points:**

- 1. Spatially concentrated poverty: Rise of distressed neighbourhoods in larger cities**
- 2. Causal complexity: No single factor but multiple stressors (eg. labour market, racial discrimination, social isolation)**
- 3. Holistic solutions: No single actor has the jurisdiction, resources or networks to 'go it alone'**



# *Solutions Elsewhere: Creative Federalism*

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**Other federations do creative 'join ups' known as multi-level governance**

- **United States: 50 year history of bottom-up, community development in neighbourhoods enabled by federal government and foundation sector (Model Cities, Empowerment Zones, Neighbourhood Partnerships Office)**
- **Australia: Since 2008 National Social Inclusion Board policy focal point for tri-level programming in specific places: neighbourhoods, Indigenous Peoples**
- **European Union: Structural Funds for Urban Pilot Projects that combine Innovation and Inclusion: multi-level collaboration in neighbourhoods**

**What about Canada?**



## *Canada? Not so Much*

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**Canadian federalism has been selectively creative: eg. Medicare and Multiculturalism**

***But not in 'poverty and place' policy***

- **Federal-Provincial Competition**
- **Local Actors Ignored**
- **Departmental Silos**
- **Risk-averse culture**

**Lots of Study (Senate Reports from Croll 1972 to Eggleton 2011)**

**Lots of Talk (1989 Parliamentary Resolution to end Child Poverty)**



## *Canada's Track Record ...*

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### **But Policy Action? "Patchwork Quilt of One-offs"**

- **Federal: Short term Pilot Projects (eg. Neighbourhood Improvement Program 1974-77; Action for Neighbourhood Change 2004-2006)**
- **Provincial: several emerging poverty reduction strategies (Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, New Brunswick)**
- **Municipal and Community: On the front lines, much experimentation (eg. Strong Neighbourhood Task Forces, Anti-Poverty Roundtables, Vibrant Communities Networks)**

**What's missing? Not joined-up, synergies lost: the sum remains less than the parts!**

***"We are in a classic "path dependency" rut with poverty – governments go back and forth in the same policy rut simply because it is easier" (Senator Hugh Segal, 2010).***



## *Canadian Policy Ingenuity 'Under the Radar': Urban Development Agreements*

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***"You create a system that's not the usual ad hoc deliberations and serendipitous coming together of resources and people and interests. You actually define a problem and an agenda that is compelling and you put the pieces together so you can deal in a systematic way and create a long-term impact"***

***-Voice from the community***



## *Urban Development Agreements: What?*

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**Five year 'Pragmatic Deals' among federal, provincial, municipal governments to work together on 'place-based wicked problems' and to engage community organizations and local residents in solutions**

### **UDAs all about:**

- **Coordination between government departments**
- **Alignment across policy fields**
- **Collaboration among public-private-community-university sectors**

### **UDAs not about:**

- **Constitutional change**
- **Policy unilateralism**
- **Program downloading**





## *Urban Development Agreements: Why?*

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**Several key drivers ...**

- **Wicked Problems require systemic strategies not one-off interventions**
- **Inter-governmental competition/conflict creates program duplication and leaves service gaps**
- **Front-line activists seeking to bring profile, focus, and resources to challenges arising in particular neighbourhoods**
- **Crisis can be the trigger to collaboration**



# *Urban Development Agreements: How?*

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## *Canadian Policy Ingenuity in Action*

### **1. Guiding Principles:**

**Process: Respect, Transparency, Accountability**

**Outcomes: Innovation, Inclusion, Sustainability**

**2. Framework Agreement: “terms and conditions/roles and responsibilities for parties to cooperate, promote, support economic, social, community development”**

**3. Governance Structure: 3 Nested Planning Committees: Policy (3 Politicians); Management (9 Civil Servants); Operations(7 street level bureaucrats working with communities)**



## *Urban Development Agreements: How?*

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- 4. Mini-Secretariat: Professional support  
(communication, outreach, reporting)**
- 5. Policy Task Teams: Multi-sectoral projects  
joining economic and social development**
- 6. Street Level Office: Single window for public  
access to services/programs**

***These six mechanisms common to all UDAs***



## *Urban Development Agreements: How?*

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- *Asset-based Community Development*  
**Guiding philosophy of UDAs emphasizes “gifts, skills, capacities” of neighbourhoods not needs and problems**

**Build assets that empower residents and their associations**

- *Asset mapping more than needs assessment*
  1. Knowledge
  2. Organizations
  3. Networks
  4. Aspirations



## *Urban Development Agreements: Where?*

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- **In six Western Canadian cities dating back to 1981**
- **Federal RDA “Western Economic Diversification Canada”: the catalyst, convenor, supporter**
- **Two Major Models: Vancouver and Winnipeg; plus Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, Victoria**
- **Toronto in 2005 (Regent Park Revitalization) but never finalized**

***Note: Vancouver and Winnipeg UDAs won international and national awards for innovative governance, and the model exported to other countries such as Chile (but not Ontario!)***



## *Vancouver Agreement in Focus*

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**Context: “Aspiring World Class City with Neighbourhood in Crisis in its midst”**

**DTES: decades of policy: 3 levels of government, 25 departments, 300 community organizations**

**Still: poverty, crime, substance abuse, public health, sex trade**

**Late 1990s a new approach: Municipal Neighbourhood Integrated Service Team and Four Pillars Anti-Drug Coalition (prevention, treatment, harm reduction, enforcement)**



## *Vancouver Agreement in Focus*

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- Public consultation on the new approach (Mayor's Forum, Community Forum, Vancouver Sun Insert, Opinion Surveys)
- Consensus: DTES challenges beyond the scope and scale of municipality and community organizations
- Vancouver City Council requests tri-level approach to address issues
- Two federal departments step-up: Health Canada (social determinants health model) and RDA-WED (UDA model)



## *Vancouver Agreement in Focus*

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- July 1999 draft Vancouver Agreement signed by 3 governments, with first focus the DTES
- Six months of community consultation on what should be done, and how to ensure ongoing community role
- March 2000 5 year agreement between 3 governments and also the Vancouver Health Board and Vancouver Police Department
- Initially unfunded: emphasis on coordination, gaps/duplications, and adapt existing policies and programs; 44 departments/agencies!





## *Vancouver Agreement in Focus*

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- UDA “Narrative” emerges

*More than a vision, an esprit de corps that  
“motivates, aligns, markets”*

1. “Population Health is the foundation”
2. “Revitalization without Displacement”
3. “In the Spirit of the Vancouver Agreement”



## *Vancouver Agreement in Focus*

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- 2003 Federal and Provincial Governments invest \$20 million, Municipality makes in-kind contributions
- VA Strategic Plan, Four Themes
  1. Revitalize Hastings Corridor
  2. Dismantle the Open Drug Scene
  3. Turn Problem Hotels into Contributory Hotels
  4. Make the Community Safer for the most vulnerable



## *Vancouver Agreement in Focus*

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- Pathbreaking Projects:  
Economic and Employment Development
    1. Create “Building Opportunities with Business”
    2. Community Benefits Agreement for DTES jobs/training in Olympics development
    3. Social Purchasing Portal for contracts for DTES suppliers
- (VA coordination: federal economic development and provincial employment policies, municipal-community support for local suppliers and CBA negotiations)***



# Vancouver Agreement in Focus

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- Pathbreaking Projects

North America's first Safe Injection Site

Implement the Four Pillars through supervised injection, opening of related health care clinics, attack infrastructure of drug trade

*(VA coordination: federal drug policy exemption, provincial operational funding for site, City police redeployed for safety around site and prevention strategy)*



# Vancouver Agreement Achievements

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## General Process

- **Changed government behaviours: cooperation and permission to take risks**
- **Unexpected Public-Private-Community Partnerships**
- **Police-Community Relations Recast**

## Specific Outcomes

- **More employment**
- **Fewer substance abuse deaths**
- **Reduced crime**
- **Improved sex-trade conditions**

***"The Vancouver Agreement is the most promising governance model to meet community needs"*** (Auditor General of Canada, 2005)



## *Compare Winnipeg: 30 years, 4 UDAs*

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- **Big Money:** \$350 million leverages \$720 million
- **Physical Infrastructure:** Two Inner-City Development Corporations for revitalization
- **Government Alignment:** Each level leads in its core competency, maintains separate funding/accountability
- **Aboriginal Focus:** Key theme in 4 agreements
- **Learning by Doing:**  
“*One way of looking at Winnipeg is to say that the past 30 years have been a practical experiment in determining what works and what doesn't in re-vitalizing inner cities*” (University of Winnipeg Professor, Jim Silver)



# Winnipeg Agreements' Achievements

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## General Process

1. **Leveraging/Engaging Private Sector**
2. **Political Champions (Minister Lloyd Axworthy *was* the first Winnipeg Agreement)**
3. **Nurturing Community and Resident Capacity**

## Specific Outcomes

1. **Urban Development Corporations for inner city revitalization**
2. **Aboriginal Food Cooperatives**
3. **Multi-service neighbourhood centres**



## *Urban Development Agreements: Summarizing the Value-adds*

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***Judy Rogers, former City Manager, Vancouver***

- 1. value of the inter-governmental relationships:*** each learn about the other's internal systems and cultures.
- 2. five-year term*** of the Agreement provides a stability to the relationship which allows long-term planning.
- 3. important acknowledgement that there are issues to address which require the support of all partners to solve.***
- 4. government funding is being used in a strategic manner, with the three partners identifying areas in which they are able to provide maximum impact to the community.***
- 5. the City is able to work directly with the Federal Government*** recognizing the benefits that governments can provide ***because of our proximity to our citizens,*** and our stability – our team (City of Vancouver) has been involved from the beginning of this strategy.





## *UDAs: What are the Success Factors?*

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1. **Common Accountability Platform:** “All in and All own”
2. **Policy Feedback Loops:** “From the front lines to the Cabinet table and back”
3. **Align People and Place Policies:** “Universal social programs bedrock of community development”
4. **High level Political Champions:** “Credibility, focus, resources, and results”
5. **Local Community Champions:** “Boundary crossing leaders who connect the dots”
6. **City-wide mandate but place focus:** “Identify first neighbourhood to build momentum”



## *UDAs: What are the Success Factors?*

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Such collaborations require new attitudes/  
practices from all:

- **Government officials:** from 'control freakery' to enabling partner
- **Community organizations:** from 'oppositional to propositional' engagement
- **Business leaders:** from single to triple bottom line
- **Knowledge sector:** from ivory tower to action-research and constructive critic
- **Political leaders:** from short term take credit culture to long term shared responsibility
- **Neighbourhood residents:** from the sidelines to creating their own local history



## *UDAs: What are the barriers?*

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1. **Shifting political winds:** new governments with different views and priorities
2. **Central agency indifference:** PCO/PMO/Cabinet Office have to push and enable the line Departments to join-up
3. **Cumbersome:** “talkfest” and endless meetings
4. **Conflict resolution:** when positions differ no dispute settlement mechanism



## *A Canada-Ontario-Hamilton Urban Development Agreement?*

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*"There is no city in Canada more ready and more deserving of a UDA"*

- 1. the 'poverty and place' challenges are complex**
- 2. the data has been compiled and analysed and publicized (eg *The Spectator* series)**
- 3. the local champions are now a committed team**
- 4. the community's assets are mobilized and networked**
- 5. the city has a compelling vision and story: "The Best Place to Raise a Child"**



## *A Canada-Ontario-Hamilton Urban Development Agreement?*

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1. **Guiding Principles:** “ Collaborate to enhance, promote, support city-region social, economic, environmental, and cultural sustainability”
2. **First Focus:** identify priority neighbourhoods informed by local data (Social Planning and Research Council Hamilton)
3. **Subsidiary Agreements:** plan further places or policy fields for action
4. **Engage Networks:** eg. Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction; Jobs Prosperity Collaboration
5. **Leverage Upper Level Policy:** Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy



## *A Policy Opening? FedDev Ontario*

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- **Regional Development Agency similar to WED created in August 2009**
- **\$1 Billion in targeted investments over 5 years with local partnership mandate; “additional funding available to support infrastructure and community investments”**
- **Community prosperity and diversification a priority and non-for-profit organizations eligible funding partners**
- **FedDev Ontario learns about UDAs from WED**



## *Canadian Senate Report Recommendation*

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- **December 2009 300 page Senate Report “In From the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness”**
- **Bi-partisan Co-Chairs: Art Eggleton Liberal, Hugh Segal, Conservative**

***“To facilitate support for local approaches and solutions to complex social and economic problems, the Committee recommends that the federal government explore and implement additional Urban Development Agreements among the federal, provincial and municipal governments, in concert with community-identified leaders and priorities”***



## *Moving Forward: Challenges and Opportunities*

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- **Mixed Federal Signals: VA, WA end in 2010; yet Throne Speech proposes federal “communities agenda”**
- **Widening national anti-poverty coalition: business, labour/community groups, provincial/municipal attention, high level policy inquiries/reports**
- **UDAs not panacea but piece of the puzzle: robust local platform for planning, targeting, and acting**
- **On the horizon: 2013 renewal of Canada Health and Social Transfer -- *put UDAs on the agenda!***